AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently amended) An apparatus for gas treatment of products, comprising

a housing [[(1)]] having top, bottom and side walls ~~(2; 3; 4, 5)~~,

a conveyor belt [[(8)]] for transporting the products along a first path [[(10)]] in the housing [[(1)]],

a tunnel [[(11)]] having perforated walls [[(12)]] and enclosing the conveyor belt [[(8)]] along the first path [[(10)]],

gas circulation means [[(18)]] communicating with the tunnel [[(11)]] via the perforated walls [[(12)]] for circulating gas into the tunnel [[(11)]] in the form of gas jets impinging upon the products carried by the conveyor belt [[(8)]], and out of the tunnel [[(11)]] in a return channel [[(13)]] back to the gas circulation means [[(18)]], and

gas-conditioning means [[(19, 20)]] positioned in the return channel [[(13)]] for conditioning the gas circulated by the gas circulation means [[(18)]],

characterized by walls [[(15-17)]] being separated from the walls [[(2-5)]] of the housing [[(1)]], said separated walls [[(15-17)]] being connected with the perforated walls [[(12)]] of the tunnel [[(11)]] and having an opening towards and connected to an outlet of the gas[[.]] circulation means [[(18)]] in order to form a ~~high-pressure~~ high-pressure chamber [[(14)]] substantially above the tunnel [[(11)]] and constituting a gas circulation channel from said outlet of the gas circulation means [[(18)]] to the perforated walls [[(12)]] of the tunnel [[(11)]],

at least one substantially vertical part of the walls [[(15-17)]] forming the high-pressure chamber [[(14)]] being removable so as to provide access to the inside of the high-pressure chamber [[(14)]].

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Seattle, Washington 98101
206 682 8100

2. (Currently amended) An apparatus for gas treatment of products as claimed in claim 1, wherein said at least one substantially vertical part of the walls [[(15-17)]] forming the high-pressure chamber [[(14)]] is slidable for providing an access opening into the high-pressure chamber [[(14)]].

3. (Currently amended) An apparatus for gas treatment of products as claimed in claim 1, wherein said at least one substantially vertical part of the walls [[(15-17)]] forming the high-pressure chamber [[(14)]] is articulated for providing an access opening into the ~~hihg-pressure~~ high-pressure chamber [[(14)]].

4. (Currently amended) An ~~apparutus~~ apparatus for gas treatment of products as claimed in any one of claims 1-3, wherein the vertical parts of the walls [[(15-17)]] forming the high-pressure chamber [[(14)]] are removable all along the tunnel [[(11)]].

5. (Currently amended) An apparatus for gas treatment of products as claimed in 4, wherein substantially vertical parts of the walls [[(15-17)]] forming the high-pressure channel [[(14)]] of the removable on both sides of the tunnel [[(11)]].

6. (Currently amended) An apparatus for gas treatment of products as claimed in claim 1, wherein the high-pressure chamber [[(14)]] has a top wall [[(17)]] positioned above the tunnel [[(11)]] and supporting the gas circulation means [[(18)]].

7. (Currently amended) An apparatus for gas treatment of products as claimed in claim 1, wherein the conveyor belt [[(8)]] is foraminous, a top wall [[(12)]] of the tunnel [[(11)]] is perforated substantially over its whole area, and a bottom wall of the tunnel [[(11)]] has perforated sections extending transversely of the first path [[(10)]].

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Seattle, Washington 98101
206.682.8100

8. (Currently amended) An apparatus for gas treatment of products as claimed in 7, wherein the bottom wall of the tunnel [[(11)]] has a plurality of openings alternating with said perforated sections and communicating with the return channel [[(13)]].

9. (Currently amended) An apparatus for gas treatment of products as claimed in claim 1, wherein at least one of the side walls [[(4, 5)]] of the housing [[(1)]] along the high-pressure chamber [[(14)]] is removable so as to widen the space between said at least one wall [[(4, 5)]]and the high-pressure chamber [[(14)]].

10. (Currently amended) An apparatus for gas treatment of product as claimed in claim 9, wherein said side walls [[(4, 5)]] of the housing [[(1)]] comprises at least two adjoining sections ~~(4a, 4b, 5a, 5b)~~.

11. (Currently amended) An apparatus for gas treatment of products as claimed in claim 9, wherein said removable side walls [[(4, 5)]] are depending from telescopic arms [[(7)]] mounted on the top wall [[(2)]] of the housing [[(1)]].

12. (Currently amended) An apparatus for gas treatment of products as claimed in claim 6, wherein the conveyor belt [[(8)]] is foraminous, a top wall [[(12)]] of the tunnel [[(11)]] is perforated substantially over its whole area, and a bottom wall of the tunnel [[(11)]] has perforated sections extending transversely of the first path [[(10)]].

13. (Currently amended) An apparatus for gas treatment of products as claimed in 12, wherein the bottom wall of the tunnel [[(11)]] has a plurality of openings alternating with said perforated sections and communicating with the return channel [[(13)]].

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Seattle, Washington 98101
206 682 8100

14. (Currently amended) An apparatus for gas treatment of products as claimed in claim 13, wherein at least one of the side walls [[(4, 5)]] of the housing [[(1)]] along the high-pressure chamber [[(14)]] is removable so as to widen the space between said at least one wall [[(4, 5)]] and the high-pressure chamber [[(14)]].

15. (Currently amended) An apparatus for gas treatment of products as claimed in claim 14, wherein said side walls [[(4, 5)]] of the housing [[(1)]] comprises at least two adjoining sections ~~(4a, 4b 5a, 5b)~~.

16. (Currently amended) An apparatus for gas treatment of products as claimed in claim 15, wherein said removable side walls [[(4, 5)]] are depending from telescopic arms [[(7)]] mounted on the top wall [[(2)]] of the housing [[(1)]].

17. (Currently amended) An apparatus for gas treatment of products, comprising a housing having top, bottom and side walls;

a conveyor belt for transporting the products along a path in the housing [[,]] ;

a tunnel having perforated walls and enclosing the conveyor belt along the path;

a gas circulation device communicating with the tunnel via the perforated walls for circulating gas into the tunnel in the form of gas jets impinging upon the products carried by the conveyor belt, and out of the tunnel in a return channel back to the gas circulation device;

a gas conditioning device for conditioning the gas circulated by the gas circulation device;

a ~~high pressure~~ high-pressure chamber formed by walls within the housing, wherein the walls of the high-pressure chamber are separate from the walls of the housing, the ~~high pressure~~ high-pressure chamber ~~having an inlet~~ in communication with ~~the outlet of~~ the return channel and ~~having an outlet in communication with~~ the perforated walls of the tunnel, with the gas

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Seattle, Washington 98101
206 682 8100

circulation device maintaining the ~~high pressure~~ high-pressure chamber at a higher pressure than the return channel; and

at least one substantially vertical part of the walls forming the high-pressure chamber being removable so as to provide access to the inside of the high-pressure chamber.

18. (Previously presented) An apparatus for gas treatment of products as claimed in Claim 17, wherein the gas conditioning device is a cooling battery.

19. (Previously presented) An apparatus for gas treatment of products as claimed in Claim 17, wherein the gas conditioning device is a heat exchanger.

20. (Previously presented) An apparatus for gas treatment of products as claimed in Claim 17, wherein the gas conditioning device is an electrical heater.

21. (Previously presented) An apparatus for gas treatment of products as claimed in Claim 17, wherein the gas conditioning device is a moisture regulating device.

22. (Previously presented) An apparatus for gas treatment of products as claimed in Claim 17, wherein the at least one substantially vertical part of the walls forming the high-pressure chamber is slideable for providing an access opening into the high-pressure chamber.

23. (Previously presented) An apparatus for gas treatment of products as claimed in Claim 17, wherein the at least one substantially vertical part of the walls forming the high-pressure chamber is articulated for providing an access opening into the high-pressure chamber.

24. (Previously presented) An apparatus for gas treatment of products as claimed in Claim 17, wherein vertical parts of the walls forming the high-pressure chamber are removable all along the tunnel.

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25. (Previously presented) An apparatus for gas treatment of products as claimed in Claim 22, wherein vertical parts of the walls forming the high-pressure chamber are removable all along the tunnel.

26. (Previously presented) An apparatus for gas treatment of products as claimed in Claim 23, wherein vertical parts of the walls forming the high-pressure chamber are removable all along the tunnel.

27. (Previously presented) An apparatus for gas treatment of products as claimed in Claim 24, wherein substantially vertical parts of the walls forming the high-pressure chamber are removable on both sides of the tunnel.

28. (Previously presented) An apparatus for gas treatment of products as claimed in Claim 17, wherein the high-pressure chamber has a top wall positioned above the tunnel and supporting the gas circulation means.

29. (Previously presented) An apparatus for gas treatment of products as claimed in Claim 17, wherein the conveyor belt is foraminous, a top wall of the tunnel is perforated substantially over its whole area, and a bottom wall of the tunnel has perforated sections extending transversely of the first path.

30. (Previously presented) An apparatus for gas treatment of products as claimed in Claim 29, wherein the bottom wall of the tunnel has a plurality of openings alternating with the perforated sections and communicating with the return channel.

31. (Previously presented) An apparatus of gas treatment of products as claimed in Claim 17, wherein at least one of the side walls of the housing along the high-pressure chamber

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Seattle, Washington 98101
206 682 8100

is removable so as to widen the space between the at least one wall and the high-pressure chamber.

32. (Previously presented) An apparatus for gas treatment of products as claimed in Claim 31, wherein the side walls of the housing comprises at least two adjoining sections.

33. (Previously presented) An apparatus for gas treatment of products as claimed in Claim 31, wherein the removable side walls are depending from telescopic arms mounted on the top wall of the housing.

34. (Previously presented) an apparatus for gas treatment of products as claimed in Claim 28, wherein the conveyor belt is foraminous, a top wall of the tunnel is perforated substantially over its whole area, and a bottom wall of the tunnel has perforated sections extending transversely of the first path.

35. (Previously presented) An apparatus for gas treatment of products as claimed in Claim 34, wherein the bottom wall of the tunnel has a plurality of openings alternating with the perforated sections and communicating with the return channel.

36. (Previously presented) An apparatus for gas treatment of products as claimed in Claim 35, wherein at least one of the side walls of the housing along the high-pressure chamber is removable so as to widen the space between the at least one wall and the high-pressure chamber.

37. (Previously presented) An apparatus for gas treatment of products as claimed in Claim 36, wherein the side walls of the housing comprises at least two adjoining sections.

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38. (Previously presented) An apparatus for gas treatment of products as claimed in Claim 37, wherein the removable side walls are depending from telescopic arms mounted on the top wall of the housing.

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1420 Fifth Avenue
Suite 2800
Seattle, Washington 98101
206.682.8100